



The Future of Montana's Tourism and Recreation Industry

The Hingston Roach Group (THRG) has been selected to guide the development of the 2003-2007 Strategic Plan for Montana's Tourism and Recreation Industry. The five-year plan will help the state's tourism and recreation industry continue to play a vital role in Montana's economy and social structure. This will be the industry's third five-year strategic plan.

The THRG planning team has hosted a series of public meetings throughout the state in late October and early November to get input for the project from citizens, businesses and other organizations.

"We want Montanans to tell us what they want tourism and recreation to become by the year 2007, and how much is enough," said Lorraine Roach, president of The Hingston Roach Group and leader of the state's contracted planning team. Some of the questions the planning team will be asking at the public meetings include where and when do Montanans want more tourism, how should recreation and tourism activities and facilities be enhanced, and what type of tourists are most (or least) desirable. "Our job is to develop a plan to guide tourism and recreation development in a way that is acceptable to citizens, and beneficial to the state's economy and busi-

nesses," she explained.

The public meetings are the first phase of the strategic planning process, which is scheduled for completion by summer 2002. Citizens and organizations will have additional opportunities to participate through direct contact with the planning team, feedback on proposed strategies and priorities, and a public comment period scheduled for May 2002.

THRG was selected for the project through a competitive bid process conducted by Travel Montana. In 2000, THRG developed the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Master Plan for Montana's Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission.

A Strategic Plan web page is posted on Travel Montana's industry web site, www.travelmontana.state.mt.us. The site will be updated with information related to the strategic planning process. For additional information contact Travel Montana at (406) 444-2654

Kalispell, Huntley and Sidney Awarded TIIP Grants

The Northwest Montana Historical Society in Kalispell, Huntley Project Museum of Irrigated Agriculture in Huntley and Richland Youth Hockey, Inc. of Sidney have been awarded a total of \$150,000 from the Montana Commerce Department's Tourism

Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) "bed tax" grant funds to assist in the completion of tourism-related facility improvements.

Governor Judy Martz approved the TIIP grant funding for the three tourism-related projects following recommendations from the Montana Commerce Department and the state's Tourism Advisory Council. The three TIIP grant recipients were selected from 33 applications submitted for funding to Travel Montana.

"The state investment in these three tourism-related projects is part of our effort to enhance Montana's communities and strengthen the local and state economy," said Governor Martz in approving the TIIP grant awards. "Each of these projects represents an investment in the local construction and service industries as well as adding to Montana's appeal as a visitor destination and a great place to live."

Montana Commerce Department Director Mark Simonich said the successful applicants "presented well thought out projects that had solid community support, added to the community's magnetism for both residents and visitors, and brought together a good mix of funds to make their project a reality. These funds have made it possible for communities around the state to sustain their vitality."

Since 1995, TIIP grants have provided \$1.5 million in tourism "bed tax" funds to 31 projects in 25 Montana communities. TIIP grants funds are provided by the state's 4 percent tourism "bed tax" which is assessed on the lodging price of all accommodations across Montana, including campgrounds. The grants are awarded through a competitive process and require a \$1 local match for every \$2 provided by grant funds.

Did You Know?

- The readers of *Ski Magazine* ranked Big Mountain and Big Sky Resort in the top 30 best North American Ski Resorts.
- The November issue of *Skiing Magazine* highlights three of Montana's smaller ski areas: Bear Paw, Turner Mountain and Maverick Mountain.
- The "Update" is available electronically. To receive this monthly publication online you may sign up on our Intranet site www.travelmontana.state.mt.us

Gosink Up for the Task

Pam Gosink, Group and Overseas Marketing Manager, has been named the acting administrator for Travel Montana. She is filling the shoes of Matthew Cohn. Pam has been with Travel Montana for nine years. A permanent Travel Montana administrator is expected to be on board by January 2002.

Welcome to the Team

Travel Montana would like to welcome new staff. Sarah Willis, Administrative Assistant to the Travel Montana Administrator; Deb Williams, Publicity/Photographer Department Assistant; and Deb Knudsen, Administrative Assistant in our Electronic Marketing Department. Good luck to all in your new endeavors.

Meet Me in Montana

Group Travel Specialist Marlee Iverson recently attended two meeting planners' conferences, Affordable Meetings in Baltimore and Incentive Travel & Meeting Executives in Chicago. The annual gatherings are an opportunity to connect with meeting planners who are involved with the incentive travel markets, business markets and the corporate retreat markets. Marlee reports that Montana was well received at both of the events. She says the meeting planners at the Chicago conference were especially interested in domestic destinations like Montana because their clients will be staying stateside due to the September 11 tragedy. If you are interested in the leads from these meetings

you can find them on Travel Montana's intranet site at www.travelmontana.state.mt.us in the programs section under meetings and conventions or you can call Marlee at (406) 444-4107 or e-mail marlee@visitmt.com.



Lights, Camera, Action: Film Office News

The Inside Story - A Film Production and Montana Economic Development Conference was held in Livingston, Montana, October 19-20, 2001. The two-day event focused on Montana as a film location. Friday's panel discussion titled "Film Production and Economic Development," was composed of film professionals, economic experts and government officials. The lively panel discussion was followed by a screening of *A River Runs Through It* introduced by the producer of the film, Patrick Markey. Saturday's event, "The Art, Craft and Business of Film Production" featured film professionals from Montana, Los Angeles and New York. Standing room only crowds of over 200 attended both of the panel discussions.

Hear Ye Hear Ye – Call for Grant Applications

The Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission, the Tourism Advisory Council and the Bonneville Power Administration are offering grants to qualified non-profit organizations undertaking Lewis & Clark-related projects in preparation for the 200-year anniversary of the Lewis & Clark Expedition through Montana. The deadline for the grant applications is December 21, 2001. For guidelines, an application and information visit www.montanalewisandclark.org and look under the what's new section, contact your regional bicentennial commission or call the Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission at (406) 443-2109.



Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

Calendar of Events

November

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|------|--|
| 9-14 | National Tour Association (NTA) Convention—Houston |
| 13 | Montana Night Event, NTA—Houston |
| 28 | Regions and CVB's Meeting, Helena |

For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to Travel Montana's Intranet site:
travelmontana.state.mt.us.



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